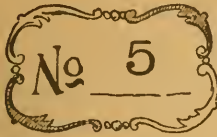


NAME



PRICE 7 CENTS



Public School
Writing Course

VERTICAL SYSTEM

BY

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AUTHORIZED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



TORONTO

G. M. ROSE & SONS.

POSITION.

The position of the writer will, to a certain extent, be determined by the shape of the desk, and its size relatively to the writer; therefore we do not think it wise to lay down a rigid set of rules. Each teacher must consider the conditions under which his pupils are working, compare them with the ideal, and modify the instructions accordingly.



The ideal conditions would be a healthy, well-formed child, and a desk about 15 degrees slope, of such size as to allow half of the forearm to rest on the desk and the elbows to hang naturally at the side. It would not then be necessary to give any instructions or drill on position or movement. There would be no tendency to assume an unhealthful posture, and the pupil would have complete control of his arm. Movement exercises would be as unnecessary as exercises for the movement of the tongue in learning to speak. At present, however, we have to deal mostly with the approximately flat desk, so generally used throughout the country, and for which sloping writing is no doubt responsible.

With this style of desk, the writing line of the paper should be from three to six inches from the edge of the desk.

The arm should rest lightly on the upper part of the wrist, with the elbows hanging easily at the side, the weight of the arm being principally supported from the shoulder.

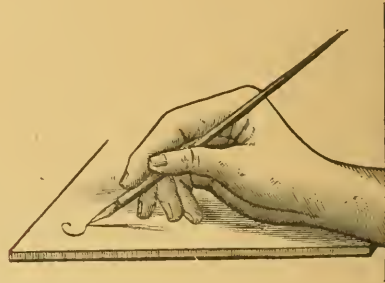
The movement is then from the shoulder, and

the wrist slides along the desk. For a few minutes at the commencement of each writing lesson it is well to have the pupils practise writing with the hand and arm entirely free from the desk, but in doing this they should not be allowed to raise the elbows.

With nearly flat desks, pupils are very likely to spread the arms and settle down, unnaturally curving the spine, hunching the shoulders, bringing the eyes too near the paper, rendering free, vertical writing almost impossible.

PENHOLDING.

The position of the hand will also be determined to some extent by the height and slant of the desk. The pen should be lightly grasped



between the thumb and second finger and steadied by the first finger, nearly straight, resting upon it, the end about three-fourths of an inch to one inch from the point. The third and fourth fingers should bend under the hand, which slides on the side of the little finger.

In no case should the pupils be taught to hold the hand so that the nails of the third and fourth fingers will touch the paper; practice with the hand in this position will result in one of two things—either vertical drawing or backhand scrawling.

Some children have a tendency to grip the pen, or from the use of pencils have formed the habit of doing so. This may be corrected by simply requiring the pupil to extend the first finger, to bend the thumb well, and with the left hand to move the pen handle out to cross the first finger above the knuckle.

1
Aztecs, an early Mexican people.

Bay of Bengal is south of India.

Cocoa-nuts grow in Zanzibar. C

Defoe wrote "Robinson Crusoe".

Europe is the smallest continent. ⁵

Frigid zones are very cold. Why?

Gold is used for ornaments. Why?

Iceland is famous for its geysers.

Jamestown, Va. was founded, 1607.

Kingston, the capital of Jamaica.

Llanos, South American plains.

Napoleon died at St. Helena, 1821.

Ozone is a form of pure oxygen. I

Potatoes first grew in America.

Quito is situated near the equator.

Rainbows show how many colors?

Spencer wrote "The Fairie Queene". U.

Tides often change a coast-line.

Upsala, an historic town of Sweden.

Via means by way of, as Via Xeres.

Why is Quebec colder than France?



Xerxes was a famous Persian King.

Yokohama is the seaport of Tokio.

\$1234567890. \$1234567890.

PENS.

The pens heretofore commonly used in schools will be found quite unsuitable for vertical writing. It is essential that all the lines should be strong, hence the pen must be of at least medium breadth and firmness, and very smooth.

LIFTING THE PEN.

In the primary books, especially, it will be observed that the letters in a word are often disconnected. For this there are several reasons. Little children cannot write a connected hand. The effort to lead or force them to do so tends to illegibility, the letter forms degenerating towards the end of the word. The joinings are non-essentials, and the essential forms are best learned when the joinings are frequently omitted. While there is a greater continuity in the higher books, there are enough breaks to train the writer to regard the joinings of little importance, to be used or ignored, as is convenient in any particular condition of nerve or muscle, or position of the hand.

TRAINING IN GETTING CLEAR CONCEPTS.

It must be remembered that the child does not directly try to reproduce the copy before him. It is rather the concept held in consciousness that he tries to represent on paper. Hence an important part of the writing lesson is to train in accurate perception of the forms and relations of the letters. When taking up a new copy it is best for the pupil to have a separate sheet of practice paper. Let the pupils look at the copy for a short time, then close the copy book and write it on their practice paper. They should then open the book, compare the copy with the reproduction, and this should be repeated until the pupils show that they have a fair concept of the form of the word. When the teacher sees where the pupils have not observed well, he should illustrate the mistakes on the blackboard and make suggestions for correction.

TRACING IN THE AIR.

After calling attention to special points in the copy, a good general method is to place those parts of the copy with the pointer, and have the pupils with outstretched arm write the forms in the air.

INDIVIDUALITY.

The letter forms in this system are merely typical, as simple as they can well be made. They are models for a basis of training, but it is not expected that pupils will acquire and preserve just these forms, nor is it desirable they should. A person's writing should be as characteristic as his speech. In the higher grades, therefore, pupils should be allowed to modify these typical forms in accordance with their individual temperaments and tastes, preserving, of course, the two essentials, legibility and ease of execution.

FIGURES.

Many good writers make poor figures, but persons who make good figures are invariably good writers. Besides the practice supplied in the books, pupils should be given special lessons in making figures. One of the best methods with advanced pupils is to have them make blocks of a figure repeated, say, seven lines of six figures each. When a page can be filled with uniform blocks of correctly made figures, the pupils should be timed in making them. A good rate of speed is about one hundred well made figures per minute.

CORRELATION.

Throughout the series there has been a constant effort to correlate the other subjects of study with the special writing lesson. The best use of these copies will require special skill and preparation on the part of the teacher. In connection with Book I, the words and sentences should be taught in the regular reading lesson, the idea or thought being always clearly developed, then the writing lesson will have a special interest, and will firmly fix what has been previously developed. Then throughout the series, before a copy is written, its statement should, so far as possible, be verified, and its relations traced, or its question should be definitely answered by either pupil or teacher. A question is often a more powerful educator than its answer, so that "Can chickens swim?" "Name some wingless birds." "Why are most fruits round?" "Why have birds hollow bones?" "Why is Maine colder than France?" etc., may long continue to stimulate observation and enquiry along manifold lines.

GUIDING LINES.

The absence of guiding lines in the primary books will be a surprise to many. By careful experiments these have been found to retard the development of writing power. When attention is called to it, it seems a matter of simple common sense that the learner cannot hold definite forms in consciousness, or acquire a natural writing movement while guiding the pen from line to line on the paper. These limitations repress individuality. No two children will naturally make letters of precisely the same size or relative proportions. The engraved copy supplies a model to all, but in working from that model the learner must be left free to express himself, if he is to do his best work, and in doing his best learn to do better.

TRACING COPIES.

It should not be difficult to see that tracing copies are equally irrational. If the work is done with care the child's attention is concentrated in an effort to guide the point of the pen along the line, so faintly printed as to be always injurious to the sight. Under these conditions it is impossible for the child to perceive the letter forms and relations, and the work in no way demands that he should. Then the practice of writing movement is wholly out of the question.

ORDINARY CLASS WRITING.

No one need expect good results in writing who insists upon careful work only during the few minutes of the special writing lesson, and then permits careless scribbling in all other written work. In the public school course all writing must be considered training in writing, and more depends upon the way the pupils are led to do their general work than upon special preparations for, or skill in conducting the special lesson.

THE TEACHER'S GENERAL WRITING.

What has been said of the formation force of the pupil's general work is also true of the teacher's. When pupils see one hundred words carelessly written to one good model, the impulses to bad work and to good will bear about the same ratio, and the bad will overwhelmingly prevail. The teacher whose blackboard writing

is uniformly good, that is to say, neat and legible, will generally have a class of uniformly good writers, and one whose general work is indifferent or poor will find these characteristics reflected in the work of his class.

SUGGESTIONS.

Time for Writing.—The writing lesson should not be given immediately after the opening of the session nor directly after recess, as pupils' hands are apt to be unsteady from the excitement of play. The last half hour of the day is also objectionable, as pupils are then apt to be too weary to take proper interest in the subject.

Length of Lessons.—Beginners should practice from twenty minutes to half an hour every day; this is probably as long as the interest can be kept up without wearying young children. More advanced classes might practice forty minutes, at least four times a week.

How Much to Write.—This must depend upon the advancement of the pupils. As much should be written at each lesson as can be done well.

Taking Ink.—Pupils should be cautioned in taking ink to dip the pen only to its shoulder and to remove it slowly, not allowing it to touch the edge of the inkwell. The observance of this rule will save many blots and inky fingers.

Class Instruction.

Teach in classes, each pupil of a class writing the same copy.

Insist upon correct position, penholding and movement, until they become fixed habits.

Use chalk and blackboard freely in all illustrations. Blackboards are as necessary in teaching writing as in teaching arithmetic, and, as a rule, those who use chalk most freely, show the best results.

Compare the pupil's writing with the copy. Point out wherein their letters are faulty, and explain how the faults are to be corrected.

Encourage pupils to criticise their own work, to use great care, to write slowly, and to practice upon exercise paper.

The main points in teaching writing are to have pupils KNOW, EXECUTE, CRITICISE, and CORRECT.

Intelligent "practice makes perfect."